

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are currently pending in the application. Applicants have amended claims 1, 4-7 and 13. Applicants request reconsideration of the application in light of the following remarks.

Telephone Interview

Applicant's attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for his courtesy and time during a telephone interview that was held on December 8, 2004. The Examiner noted the results of that telephone conference in a Telephonic Interview Summary mailed December 13, 2004. The Examiner's comments and insight were very helpful in preparing this response. It is hoped that the comments below reflect the spirit of the interview.

Restriction Requirement

Applicant appreciates the Examiner accepting Applicant's explanation of how claim 8 is readable on the elected species.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-7 and 9-21 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. In accordance with this rejection, the claims have been amended to comply with the examiner's suggestions and are now believed to conform with Section 112.

Specifically with reference to claims 1 and 13, the alternative language has been replaced by language that defines a "base unit" that includes the combination of the base plate and the handle. Because the base plate and handle are coupled together, the system will function whether the various components are attached to the handle or the base plate. Accordingly, the base plate and handle operate as a common base unit and the various components couple to that element as claimed.

Specifically with reference to claims 10-12, as shown in FIG. 12 of the application, the blade extends downwardly and away from the handle. This downward angled direction in which the blade extends is also toward the plane of the base plate and, therefore toward the base. In this way, the blade extends away from the handle and toward the base as claimed.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-7 and 9-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

Regarding Doctrine of Equivalents

Applicants hereby declare that any amendments herein that are not specifically made for the purpose of patentability are made for other purposes, such as clarification, and that no such changes shall be construed as limiting the scope of the claims or the application of the Doctrine of Equivalents.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

If any fees, including extension of time fees or additional claims fees, are due as a result of this response, please charge Deposit Account No. 19-0513. This authorization is intended to act as a constructive petition for an extension of time, should an extension of time be needed as a result of this response. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if this would in any way advance the prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 25, 2005

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